

Exploration of public health ethics through a nursing lens

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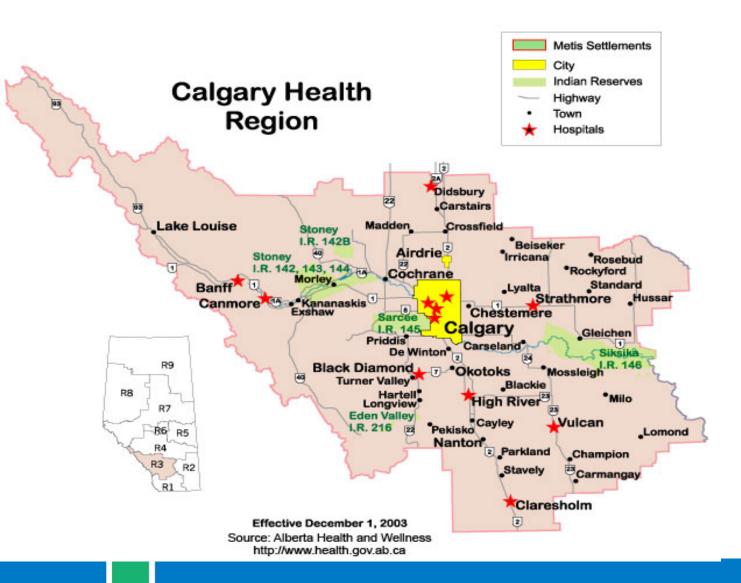
Key Learning Objectives

- Heightened awareness and knowledge of the importance of health care ethics as it relates to public health nursing practice
- An understanding of the importance of having moral space within the professional practice setting
- Increased understanding of how an ethics consultation process can assist public health nurses in enhancing their professional practice











Strengthening Ethics Knowledge

- Staff identified need for increasing ethics knowledge related to accreditation preparation
- 2006 Community Health Ethics Forum
- 2007 PH Nursing Ethics Working Group



PH Nursing Ethics Working Group

- facilitate learning and knowledge transfer related to public health ethics
- increase capacity for ethical decision making & discussion
- establish a multidisciplinary public health ethics committee (ultimate goal)



Public Health and Ethics

- Code of Ethics (CNA- 2008)
- Standard of Practice





Fundamental Principles for Ethical Decision-Making

1) Respect for Autonomy
2) Beneficence
3) Non-Maleficence
4) Justice

5) Utility



Public Health

- PHN unique roles (individual/family/community/population)
- Primarily concerned with populations
- Ethical tension -respect for individual autonomy vs well-being of the community



Moral Space

Dialogue opportunities

- Ethics reflection
- Facilitate moral community



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Case Study

- Guided ethical discussion related to Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine
- Providing HPV vaccination in school systems has raised ethical dilemmas' locally, provincially and nationally
- Consult was not intended as a vehicle to debate the science for recommendation of HPV vaccination



HPV Guided Ethical Discussion

- Questions posed :
 - Is it ethical to deny access to publicly funded HPV vaccine?
 - Is it ethical to allow a religious institution to influence public health policy?



Is it ethical to deny access to publicly funded HPV vaccine?

Justice - Resource Allocation

Beneficence







Is it ethical to allow a religious institution to influence public health policy?

- Justice Fairness
- Autonomy Respect
- Relational Ethics



Justice

- School vaccine programs most efficient vehicle
- Decisions by faith communities directly affected access
- Social determinants of health may impact families abilities to access public clinics



Autonomy

Respect

Informed decision making regarding their health care

Children more complex (parents)



Relational Ethics

- Web of relationship
- Relational lives may include relations with religion/church/faith community
- Respect for persons includes respect for the right of religious leaders to guide those they minister



Recommendations

- Increase public education resources HPV (translated)
- Consider expanding the Alberta Health Benefit programs to cover vaccination
- Continue to advocate greater access for publicly funded HPV vaccination
- Continue dialogue with religious leaders



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Reflective Practice

Learnings of Public Health Ethics

Application to your practise setting



References

- CNA Code of Ethics (2008)
- CHNC & CARNA standards of practice
- Bennett, Mary P, Ethics and the HPV Vaccine Considerations for School Nurses, J Sch Nurs, 2008; 24;275-283.
- Richard k. Zimmerman, Ethical Analysis of HPV Vaccine Policy Options. Vaccine; 2006; 24;4812-4820.
- www.PHEN.ab.ca



AHS-PHN Ethics Working Committee Members

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- Caroline Hamill (Shag CHC)
- Claire Goldberg (Thornhill CHC)
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